



COMMANDING GENERAL'S SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE POLICY STATEMENT



Sexual assault is defined as intentional sexual contact, characterized by the use of force, threat, intimidation, abuse of authority, or when the victim does not, or cannot consent. Sexual assault is a crime that cuts against the very fabric of our society and has no place in our ranks. It is a crime that not only violates the individual, but also damages the entire command. This crime is not restricted by gender, age, or rank.

Sexual assault will not be tolerated. Preventing sexual assault is the responsibility of every member of this command. Being a bystander is not an option. Marines must take decisive action to prevent sexual assault. That means stamping out the behaviors that lead to sexual assault, such as sexual harassment and other disrespectful treatment, abuse of alcohol or drugs, and inappropriate violence or aggression. Marines must follow their training and safely intervene in any situation that could lead to a sexual assault.

I charge leaders at all levels to become familiar with the contents of Marine Corps Order 1752.5C, Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program. Commanders must ensure that all members of their command are provided with information about the Marine Corps Installations West-Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton's SAPR Program, and that they receive annual refresher training.

Victim safety is paramount at all times. Victims of sexual assault may be physically, mentally, and emotionally traumatized; they are to be treated with sensitivity, decency and respect. Victims will receive appropriate medical, emotional, psychological, and social services in a timely, professional manner. Care must be taken to ensure that the identity of a victim of sexual assault is released only to those who have a valid need to know (the unit commander, military or local law enforcement).

Victims who choose to make a restricted report will have their choice honored to the fullest extent. Every victim who makes a report must have confidence in the command and the SAPR Program, and must know that their personal safety will be protected and that they will not be stigmatized by members of their unit. If as a victim or SAPR Victim Advocate you experience any form of retaliation, reprisal, ostracism, or maltreatment, you can seek assistance in reporting this through your immediate chain of command, Command Inspector General's office, or the Victim's Legal Counsel.

Alcohol use is frequently cited in connection with sexual assault incidents. I challenge all Marines to eliminate behavior that violates the Marine Corps ethos and core values and tarnishes the prestige of the Marine Corps. It is imperative that Marines take care of each other to not allow a fellow Marine to be victimized due to intoxication, or to end a career if they are convicted of a sex offense.

The Installation Sexual Assault Response Coordinators, SAPR Victim Advocates (SAPR VA), and counselors at the Community Counseling Center stand ready to provide assistance to victims of sexual assault. Commanders are responsible for selecting the best suited, most qualified representatives to serve as SAPR VAs, and to employ the available resources for victim support, case management and training to ensure all members of the unit are educated about this crime.

Eliminating sexual assault will take a coordinated community effort, and I challenge everyone to accept responsibility for achieving this goal. Our Marines, Sailors, Civilian Marines and family members deserve nothing less.

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Date

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